

the conjecture, expressed by many others, that England would shortly occupy Luristan, and give them equity and security. Another Khan of some power said to me that if England were to occupy south-west Persia, he would help her with 400 horsemen, and added, "An English fleet at Basrah, with an English army on board, would be the best sight which Bakhtiari eyes could see." <sup>1</sup>

I had to hear the long story of the Khan's complicated maladies, to look at many bad eyes, and at the wounds of a poor fellow suffering from snake-bite, who was carried on another man's back, and to promise to bring up my medicine chest the following day, the fame of the "leather box" having reached Arjanak.

On my way I had called at the *haram*, and the ladies accompanied me to the *durlar*, conduct which I think was not approved of, as they told me the next morning that they must not go there. After the Agha returned, the three wives and many other women clustered timidly round me. Two of them are very bright and pretty, and one, a Persian, very affectionate in her manner. She held my hand all the time. There was also a handsome daughter, with a baby, the discarded wife of a son of the next Khan. In winter, they said, they amuse themselves by singing, and playing with their children, and by making a few clothes, and the Persian embroiders boys' caps.

Aziz Khan has been irrepressible lately. His Arab mare is his idol, not because she is a lovable animal and carries him well, but because she is valuable property. He fusses about her ceaselessly, and if he

were allowed

<sup>1</sup> To English people the Bakhtiaris profess great  
friendliness for England,  
and the opinion has been expressed by some well-informed  
writers that, in  
the event of an English occupation of the country, their  
light horse,  
drilled by English officers, would prove valuable  
auxiliaries. I am  
inclined, however, to believe that if a collision were to  
occur in south-  
west Persia between two powers which shall be nameless,  
the Bakhtiari  
horsemen would be sold to the highest bidder.